

## The Times-Dispatch

DAILY—WEEKLY—SUNDAY.

Business Office ..... 115 E. Main Street,  
Washington Bureau, 725-727 M Street Building,  
Manchester Bureau ..... 1102 Hull Street,  
Lynchburg Bureau ..... 40 N. Sycamore St.,  
Petersburg Bureau ..... 215 Eighth St.

BY MAIL. One Six Three One  
POSTAGE PAID. Year. Mo. Mo. Mo.  
Daily with Sunday, \$5.00 \$2.00 \$1.50 .55  
Daily without Sunday, 4.00 2.00 1.00 .55  
Sunday edition only, 2.00 1.00 .50 .25  
Weekly (Wednesday), 1.00 .50 .25 .10

By Times-Dispatch Carrier Delivery Service in Richmond (and suburbs), Manchester and Petersburg.  
One Week. One Year.  
Daily with Sunday, \$5.00 \$2.00 \$1.50 .55  
Daily without Sunday, 4.00 2.00 1.00 .55  
Sunday only, 2.00 1.00 .50 .25  
(Yearly subscriptions payable in advance.)  
Entered January 27, 1907, at Richmond, Va., as second-class matter, under act of Congress of March 3, 1879.

## HOW TO CALL TIMES-DISPATCH.

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TUESDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1907.

Love has no middle course; it either rules or it serves. All human destinies lie in this dilemma.—Victor Hugo.

## SIGNS OF IMPROVEMENT.

The new year will open with a very decided improvement in the business situation. The New York banks have reduced their deficit from \$24,000,000 to \$20,000,000, in round numbers; the premium on currency has practically disappeared; the depositors in the savings banks have recovered from their fright, as evidenced by the fact that few of them have taken advantage of the sixty-day notice to withdraw their money; and there is now every promise that money will be easy and plentiful in the course of thirty or sixty days. The reports from the iron industry are most encouraging. A special from Johnstown, Pa., says that New Year's Day will be marked by the reopening of practically every department of the Cambria Steel Company and the return to work of 75 per cent. of the steel workers who have been idle for some time.

The Central Iron and Steel Company, at Harrisburg, which has been idle, will resume operations this week, and the Lorraine tin-plate mills will resume on January 6th.

The Pennsylvania Steel Company has given orders to hurry the repairs at No. 2 blooming mill, and will start it up as soon as the work is finished.

Orders have been posted at the American Iron and Steel Manufacturing Company's mills at Lebanon and Reading, announcing a resumption of operations in all departments January 6th. The mills have been closed entirely for several weeks, but many departments have been idle much longer. The American mills employ 3,000 men.

Cleveland manufacturers have under consideration plans which will mean resumption of work by fully 10,000 former employees during January. Many factories will resume practically full operations January 6th. The American Shipbuilding Company expects to take on 3,000 men in two or three weeks, which is nearly full capacity. Hundreds who were laid off by the steel mills will be taken back January 6th. Smaller factories about town, which have shut down temporarily, will re-employ hundreds more during the coming month. Indications point to a general resumption of business.

These are sample announcements taken from late newspapers, and indicate the general trend. A revival of business conditions is reflected also in reports reaching the Division of Immigration in Washington. Many of the orders for laborers which were canceled by letters to T. V. Powderly, chief of the division, in October recently have been renewed. Requests for 200,000 laborers were on file with Mr. Powderly October 1st, but when the panic came on they were canceled. But during the past two weeks Mr. Powderly has been flooded with renewals of old orders. Up to Saturday these renewals totaled 20,000 men, including skilled mechanics and laborers needed in the larger cities, where industries that were closed in December are preparing to resume operations.

Another item in our favor as a nation is our large trade balance abroad, which bids fair to increase during the coming year. Imports will naturally fall off, and the amount of money expended abroad by tourists will be materially reduced. Necessarily trade and industry will slow down a bit, as compared with the swift pace of 1907, but the foundations will be strengthened by conservatism, and the entire situation will be sounder than ever.

## NEWSPAPER CORRESPONDENTS AND THE VOTATION TAX.

The proposal of the town of St. Augustine, Fla., to put a license tax on newspaper correspondents has aroused something of a flutter in the press of that State. Most Florida papers appear to disapprove of the project, and not a few ridicule it. Probably the theory of revenue-producing which taxes a man for sending news items to out-of-town papers is open to criticism, but it is going too far to infer from it a disapproval of that man's calling and a conviction on the part of his community that "publicity" is "an evil." Yet, this is the ground taken, in half-seriousness, by the leading newspaper of Florida, the Jacksonville Times-Union.

No enlightened town could well regard the honest newspaper correspondent as a dangerous man plying a dangerous trade, who must compensate his neighbors for the privilege of injuring them by a contribution of cash to the common treasury. The value of good publicity is, of course, well understood everywhere. The correspondent, if taxed, is merely being placed on the same footing with the lawyer, the doctor and the merchant. The theory of the vocation tax is certainly not "to express disapproval." Even in the case of the saloon, that is only a secondary consideration, a kind of special use of a relationship primarily of a different sort; for the city does not sell a license to institutions of which it disapproves. It winks at them, or it abolishes them. Vocations are taxed not because the city wishes to curtail or eliminate them, but only presumably, because persons engaged in them are supposed to be better able than others to contribute to the expenses of government. If the lawyer is taxed and the coal-heaver is not, that is doubtless because it is thought that the lawyer, in the practice of his profession, will earn, or should earn, more of his neighbors' money than the coal-heaver. It does not imply that the city is secretly anxious to suppress the practice of law, while fostering and developing the art of coal-heaving to its dense extinction.

The occupation tax," says the Miami News-Record, "is a relic of barbarism, and should give way to a better, more rational and more reasonable system of collecting revenue." Probably there is a good deal of sound sense in that. But while the principle stands, it appears to be as applicable, logically, to one vocation as another.

The estimated Amherst Progress wants to know if The Times-Dispatch is seeking to unite the cities in a selfish compact, by which the tax burden of the counties is to be made still heavier. That question is unworthy of a newspaper of the character and intelligence of the Progress. We have repeatedly stated that one-third of the cities of the State would lose by the plan of taxation we have suggested, while all but eleven of the counties would profit by it; and in most of the exceptional cases the loss would be trifling. The gain to Amherst county would be considerable, for it, in 1906, paid into the State Treasury on account of its personal property tax the sum of \$1,909.25, while it drew out on account of criminal expenses only \$71.22.

Why does our contemporary look for conspiracies and hidden motives? Our reasons for suggesting the plan were plainly stated, and there is nothing behind them. The plan was offered as a remedy for inequality in assessments, which has been a standing complaint in Virginia from time immemorial. The added reasons are that it would tend to decrease crime and criminal expenses and improve the administration of local affairs.

But the Lynchburg News insists that it would hurt the schools. To the contrary, it would enable 90 per cent. of the counties to increase their local appropriations to schools without increasing taxation. A few of the counties would suffer by it, as we have admitted, and that is the weak point in the plan. But if it is otherwise good and desirable, some way could be devised to provide for the exceptional cases. We are in full accord with the News in opposing a system of taxation which would "alienate the richer sections and cities of the State from community of interest and obligation with those lacking in material wealth." No newspaper has been more active in its support of the public school system, under which the richer cities and counties are made to pay a bonus to schools in the poorer counties. We have even gone so far as to recommend an emergency fund for the exclusive benefit of those sections which are not able to provide adequate schools for their own children. The Times-Dispatch is incapable of proposing any plan which in its judgment would in any way impair the public schools of any county or city in the State.

According to a statement recently given out by Charles L. Wagner, secretary of the Slayton Lyceum Bureau, Mr. William J. Bryan is making \$50,000 a year from his lectures. Mr. Bryan stands at the head of the list of platform speakers for the size of his audiences, for the receipts at the box-office and for the demands for his appearance. During 1907 he has filled 175 dates, and his receipts for the season have averaged more than \$300 for each appearance. He started out on the 6th of January last, and spoke almost every day until September 10th, frequently twice a day, and once during the summer three times, morning, afternoon and evening, in three different towns in Iowa. In addition to these, he has made a large number of political speeches during the year; he has spoken at conventions, banquets, college commencements, X. M. C. A. and church meetings. He never speaks on Sunday for pay except at the Chautauques, where an admission fee is charged. It is not stated what fee he receives for political speeches. "The Prince of Peace" is his favorite lecture, and at Seattle last January he delivered it before an audience of 5,000 persons, his receipts being \$2,000.

The next in popularity among American lecturers is Mrs. Maud Ballington Booth, of the Salvation Army, and next after her, perhaps, is Mrs. Florence Maybrick, who was recently released from a British prison after serving a fifteen-year sentence on a charge of having poisoned her husband.

Senator Tillman is also a drawing card, but Mr. Wagner makes the humiliating statement that his bureau was compelled to drop the South Carolina lecturer because they could not improve his methods or his manners or his language upon the platform. Mr. Wagner admits that Senator Tillman is always in demand, always draws a

large audience, and has made a great deal of money lecturing and answering the Northern people. "But," he does fully adds, "wherever he speaks he creates a sensation and a controversy, and sometimes a riot is threatened. He provokes the public temper, and often his audiences are furious with him. The committees always complain of him, and everywhere he speaks there are public protests against his language and behavior."

But if he were otherwise he would not be Tillman, and if he were tamed and brought under the subjection of platform rules, perhaps he would not draw. Mr. Tillman is devilish sly. He is not only a lecturer, but a performer.

The significance of the above statements, however, is that the people of the United States have not yet lost their taste for oratory.

Rear-Admiral Goodrich, commander of the New York Navy Yard, admits that the charges contained in the article of Henry Reuterdahl that there are glaring weaknesses in the discipline and equipment of the United States Navy are substantially true. "Reuterdahl knew what he was talking about," said the admiral in a recent interview. We have never doubted it. The case may not be as bad as he has represented it to be, but Reuterdahl got his information from men in the navy, and it is in all essentials correct. It is now up to Congress to make a thorough investigation.

Governor Glenn, of North Carolina, is quite right in saying that the "special tax bonds" which the holders are now trying to make the State pay were "conceived in sin and brought forth in corruption." They were issued and the proceeds stolen by as bold a gang of political scoundrels as ever looted a government, and if ever a State was justified in repudiating a debt, North Carolina was justified in refusing to acknowledge these fraudulent claims.

President Roosevelt has done a public service in compelling the State of Nevada to attend to its own business; but we have fallen upon strange times, when the President has to prod a Governor in order to make him assert the principle of States' rights.

"Fairbanks Men in Disarray," writes a headline. Thus do the newspapers continue their splendid work of disseminating recalcitrant information. But for the activities of the press nobody outside of Indianapolis would know that there were any Fairbanks men.

The Louisville Courier-Journal appears to think that Mr. Henry Reuterdahl put his foot in it in his recent criticisms of the navy. We suppose this makes Mr. Reuterdahl among the most fleet-footed men in America.

It may yet become necessary for The Hague Conference to take arbitrary action upon the serious difference now existing between the pay envelope and the cost of living.

The Manchester (N. H.) Union speaks of "Richard Pearson Hobson," thus depriving the grand old name of Richard of that amount of not very highly desired advertising.

Post-offices were first established in 1841. Then somebody conceived the idea of a Republican form of government.

A chorus girl, so the Washington Herald informs us, asserts that "her health has been broken down from dressing so much." Of course, the lady means "dressing so often."

Probably both Tarkington thought that mere plainclothes cops would never dare raise a hand against the man who had knocked the eye out of royalties.

Possibly the report that it is dangerous to drink alcoholic beverages in Denver is only a belated bit of spite from old Louisville.

January 1st isn't till to-morrow, as every Georgian of voting age knows without a single glance at the calendar.

Cable dispatches speak of "the Democratic party" in Persia. We'll be having Populists in Turkey yet.

Into the stricken and melancholy face of Georgia old Alabama peers and reads her future.

Mr. Henry Reuterdahl's might almost be described as a powder magazine article.

If the Delawareans elect Addicks Governor, they will deserve it.

The Druce claimants got the bones.

War was declared with Spain by Congress on April 21, 1898. On April 24th Secretary John D. Long, of the Navy Department sent the following cable dispatch to Commodore Dewey, at Hongkong:

"Washington, April 24, 1898. 'War has been commenced between the United States and Spain. Proceed at once to the Philippines Islands. Commence operations at once, particularly against the Spanish fleet anchored in an approximately east and west line across the mouth of Bako Bay.'

Commodore Dewey lost no time in obeying his instructions. The Asiatic fleet consisted of the flag-

ship Olympia, the cruisers Baltimore, Boston and Raleigh, and the gunboats Concord, Petrel and McCulloch.

April 27th, or but three days after receiving the message from Secretary Long, Commodore Dewey, with his fleet of seven ships, mounting eighty-eight guns and carrying 2,000 sailors and marines, sailed from Manila Bay, an inlet on the southeast coast of China, and with his leading vessel, the battleship USS Maine, headed for the Spanish fleet in the nearby waters of Manila Bay.

"After half the squadron had passed the south channel," says Admiral Dewey, "a battery on the south side of the channel opened fire. One of the shots took effect. The squadron proceeded across the bay at slow speed," says the report, "and arrived off Manila before dawn break. It was fired upon at 5:15 A. M. by three batteries at Manila, one at Cavite and by the Spanish fleet anchored in an approximately east and west line across the mouth of Bako Bay."

Admiral Dewey, at 5:41 A. M. This was the moment when Dewey said to the commanding officer of the Olympia:

## Rhymes for To-Day

ON THE HUMBLENESS OF MUSE.

My head's as empty as a drum,  
My brain is dull, my mind is dumb.  
Cause why? Through long I've twirled  
my thumb.

My Muse is dumb.  
She has her fund of near-sweet grace—  
Yet now observe her moods grimace—  
She stares, and though I coax apace,  
Won't open her face.

She will not make a single shriek,  
A single squawk, a single squeak;  
She keeps a watchdog on her back,  
And will not speak.

She utters naught, she mutters nill;  
I said this once, again I will—  
She keeps a watchdog on her bill,  
And cke keep still.

Well, let her be! Forgive her snags,  
And let her mutterance pass;  
It is not oft we see, O crabs,  
A silent lass.

W. E. EVANS.

## MERRY JOKING.

Just Before the Fight.  
Grad (entering the Alhambra) to old Peimer: "Hey, you, can you borrow your horse and wagon outside?"

Peimer: "No, but you can't."

Grad: "You're a liar. We have."—Cornell Widow.

Bad News.  
"How are you, Mr. Myers, this inclement weather?"

Myers: "Managing to keep out of the under-weather's hands."

"Oh, I am sorry to hear that!"—Southwestern Farmer.

When He Became Personal.  
"You're a fellow!" said ever so many chances to marry somebody that amounted to something, and I threw myself away on you."

Her husband (unexpectedly) speaking up: "In my case it was quite different, madam. You were looking at me for the first time. My other girl had refused me."—Chicago Tribune.

Personal Reasons.  
"So you have put a mortgage on the farm?"

"Yes," answered Farmer Cornetson.

"I didn't put that mortgage on so's to have a mortgage on knowledge?"

"Yes," answered the farmer. "The farm was still good for a loan, but the same as I got my life insured for the same amount, I have insured my knowledge for the same amount."—Washington Star.

Replying to Ours of Recent Date.

"SALOONS in St. Louis are disappearing at the rate of 200 a year," says the Richmond Times-Dispatch.

But when she surveys her large stock of saloons, she is not disappointed by that rate of disappearance, but the average man is when told that the world's stock of saloons is being consumed.—Little Rock Gazette.

"Men who can't get wives" is the headline over a learned editorial in the Richmond Times-Dispatch.

Fortunately, the editorial in the Washington Herald is not in need of advice along any such line.—Washington Herald.

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